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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Arbeitspapier / working paper

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:
SSG Sozialwissenschaften, USB Köln

discussion paper

FS I 02 – 204

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Evidence on the Flexibility-Security Nexus in Transitional Labour Markets

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März 2002
ISSN Nr. 1011-9523

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ZITIERWEISE / CITATION

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in Transitional Labour Markets

Discussion Paper FS I 02 – 204
Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung 2002

Forschungsschwerpunkt:
Arbeitsmarkt und Beschäftigung

Research Area:
Labour Market and Employment

Abteilung:
Arbeitsmarktpolitik und Beschäftigung

Research Unit:
Labour Market Policy and Employment

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung
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Abstract

This paper deals with the question whether the concept of transitional labour market (TLM) might be useful to formulate hypotheses about the relationship between the size and nature of labour market transitions and the performance of employment regimes. The paper starts from the idea that the TLM concept, as being developed by Günther Schmid and others, might be connected with the notion of 'employment regimes' as defined by Gösta Esping-Andersen and others. Subsequently the paper aims at testing empirically whether the claims of the TLM concept with respect to labour market flexibility and work security hold in the real worlds of European labour markets.

The paper comes to the conclusion that the liberal regime combines a high level of labour mobility and flexibility (although not much higher than the corporatist or social-democratic regime) with a low level of work security, and that the social-democratic regime comes out with a high level of work security but a (somewhat) lower level of labour market mobility. However, these regimes do not fit that nicely in the 'ideal-type' as this conclusion might suggest: the liberal regimes also have fairly high levels of employment security and social-democratic countries have fairly high levels of labour mobility and flexibility. The convergence hypothesis might find some ground in these findings.

Notwithstanding this assessment, we find that the Southern regime can and should be quite clearly distinguished from the other regimes. Although the share of flexible jobs is rather high, upward mobility into permanent jobs is lower in the South and downward mobility (from work into exclusion) is higher. Hence, the Southern regime is performing worse both in terms of enhancing job mobility and preventing labour market exclusion. Apparently, regimes differ and the differences concern the particular trade-off or balance between flexibility and security within the distinct regimes.

Zusammenfassung

Thema der Studie ist die Frage, ob das Konzept der Übergangsarbeitsmärkte bei der Formulierung von Hypothesen zur Beziehung von Umfang und Formen der Arbeitsmarktübergänge und der Leistungsfähigkeit von Beschäftigungsregimes hilfreich sein könnte. Ausgangspunkt ist die Idee, ob das Konzept der „Übergangsarbeitsmärkte", wie es von Günther Schmid und anderen entwickelt wurde, mit dem von Gösta Esping-Andersen und anderen geschaffenen Konzept der „Beschäftigungsregimes" verknüpft werden könnte. Anschließend wird durch empirische Analysen getestet, ob die in der Theorie formulierten Anforderungen des Übergangsarbeitsmarkt-Konzepts hinsichtlich Arbeitsmarktflexibilität und Beschäftigungssicherheit den tatsächlichen Anforderungen auf den europäischen Arbeitsmärkten standhalten.

Als Ergebnis ist festzuhalten, dass in liberalen Beschäftigungsregimen eine hohe Mobilität und Flexibilität der Arbeit (die aber nicht sehr viel höher ist als in korporatistischen oder sozialdemokratischen Beschäftigungsregimen) mit einer niedrigen Arbeitsplatzsicherheit einhergeht und dass in sozialdemokratischen Regimen eine hohe Arbeitsplatzsicherheit mit einem etwas niedrigeren Niveau der Mobilität auf dem Arbeitsmarkt verknüpft ist. Diese Regime entsprechen aber nicht so genau dem Idealtyp, wie es die dargelegten Schlussfolgerungen suggerieren könnten: auch die liberalen Beschäftigungsregime haben ein durchaus hohes Niveau der Beschäftigungssicherheit und sozialdemokratische Länder ein hohes Niveau von Mobilität und Flexibilität auf dem Arbeitsmarkt. Diese Ergebnisse legen das Aufgreifen der Konvergenz-Hypothese nahe.

Ungeachtet dieser Überlegungen sollte das südeuropäische Beschäftigungregime von den übrigen europäischen Beschäftigungsregimen deutlich unterschieden werden. Trotz eines hohen Anteils flexibler Jobs ist die Aufwärtsmobilität in unbefristete Arbeitsverhältnisse niedriger und die Abwärtsmobilität aus Anstellungsverhältnissen in Arbeitslosigkeit höher. Insofern ist das Gesamtergebnis dieser Beschäftigungsregime bezogen auf die Erweiterung der Mobilität und die Vermeidung von Ausschluss aus dem Arbeitsmarkt schlechter.

Offensichtlich ist, dass sich die Beschäftigungsregime unterscheiden und dass die Unterschiede besonders an den spezifischen Wechselverhältnissen bzw. der Balance zwischen Flexibilität und Arbeitsplatzsicherheit zu erkennen sind.

Content

1. Introduction

The central issue dealt with in this paper concerns the question whether the concept of the transitional labour market (TLM) might be useful to formulate hypotheses about the relationship between the size and nature of labour market transitions and the performance of employment regimes. The paper starts from the idea (in section 2) that the TLM concept, as being developed by Schmid (2000) and Schmid et al. (2002) might be connected with the notion of 'employment regimes' as defined by Esping-Andersen (1999, 2000) and others. Subsequently, in section 3, the paper aims at testing empirically whether the claims of the TLM concept with respect to labour market flexibility and work security hold in the 'real worlds of European labour markets'. We focus on three types of labour market transitions: (1) the transition from private households/non-employment to flexible employment and from flexible employment to permanent employment; (2) the transition from private households/non-employment to part-time employment and from part-time employment to full-time employment, and 3) the transition from work instability or work insecurity (partial longitudinal unemployment) into work security (permanent employment). We contend that countries that are classified in our amended version of Esping-Andersen's 'ideal-types' of employment regimes, will perform differently along two dimensions: (1) (labour market) flexibility and (2) (work) security. Both of these features of national labour markets can be expected to affect both the occurrence and outcomes of the labour market transitions mentioned above.

The empirical data used here are derived from the European Community Household Panel which at the time of writing covered only three years of observation, 1994 to 1996.[1] The figures presented here were already produced and published within the framework of a project in the Fourth Framework Programme (TSER) of the European Commission (Muffels & Fouarge, 2002).

In the last section (4) we return to the questions posed at the beginning, in particular considering the significance of the relationship between the TLM-concept, the pattern of labour market transitions and the type of employment regime.

[1] In July 2001, a four wave dataset became available and mid 2002 a five wave data set (1994-1998) will likely to be released.

2. TLMs and employment regimes

The concept of the transitional labour market as coined by Schmid (2000) has a two-sided character. On the one hand the concept has been accepted by scholars and policy-makers in an increasing number of countries as a comprehensive and very challenging "sensitizing concept" for the future design and development of labour market policies, based on the acknowledgement of individual's non-standard and non-linear careers and life-cycles. From a normative point of view it seeks to establish a well-balanced relationship between paid work and other socially productive activities, as well as between collective and individual interests. It is remarkable and at the same time rather obvious that the support for and the interpretation of the TLM-concept varies across countries, depending on the particular nature of the labour market problems these countries face and the issues operating in their current national debates.

The TLM concept has been developed against the background of persisting long-term unemployment in the EU and particularly in Germany and the Netherlands. In the Netherlands the current unemployment rate is low (2,5 %) whereas there is a huge number of people drawing on (long-term) disability benefits (some 950,000 persons, one out of every seven members of the workforce). The main concern in the Netherlands, which is indeed considered a highly sensitive political issue, pertains to the policy issue of finding strategies to prevent people from dropping out of the labour market. The exclusion from the labour market either occurs because of disability or of long-term unemployment. This poses the challenge to social policy to reintegrate in particular people who are already for a rather longer period dependent on a benefit. This also emphasises the relevance for policies to take the particular features of 'new' types of employment into account and to facilitate the creation of opportunities (i.e. preventive and maintenance) for people of making transitions *within* the domain of employment itself. However, standard policy practice is to focus solely on reintegration of people who already dropped out of the labour market (Wilthagen, 2001a). The idea that labour market policies should aim at facilitating particular types of transitions and others not or less will be elaborated below.

On the other hand, however, Schmid (2000) claims that the TLM-concept also has descriptive and explanatory power, in the sense that the TLM model describes if not predicts the direction of developments within and outside the labour market. More precisely it is expected that the borders between the labour market and other social systems will become more open and will allow for the creation of transitory states between paid work and gainful non-market activities, which will preserve and enhance future employability.

This claim has opened fine and clear prospects for empirical research regarding the occurrence and the outcomes of transitions, e.g. in the realm of working-time (O'Reilly et al. eds., 2000). Much of this research bears a comparative focus, i.e. pairs or larger numbers of countries are compared usually with respect to one of the transitions envisaged in the TLM model, whether or not within one particular sector of industry or within a particular group on the labour market. The merits of comparative research on labour market transitions and their

institutional contexts are beyond doubt, but the pitfalls are evident as well. As Montaigne worded it a long time ago "comparaison n'est pas raison". The choice for particular countries seems not seldomly arbitrary or at best pragmatic.

One of the solutions is to characterise countries in a more general and stylised way and to have this characterization guide the choice for countries. A relevant and interesting debate is that on "national styles of regulation". The research that has adopted this approach focuses on the understanding of the (cultural, political and economic) origins and (social and economic/financial costs and benefits) effects of distinct national approaches towards regulation. This line of research has e.g. been developed in the area of the environment (Vogel, 1986), occupational safety and health (seminal studies are Kelman, 1981 and Wilson, 1985) and also in the area of industrial relations (e.g. Crouch, 1994 on "state traditions"). Typically for these studies is their focus on a number of dimensions of regulations and institutional arrangements and their attempt to find indicators for these dimensions. They also tried to construct typologies and classifications of countries believing that these countries might cluster into a limited set of regime-types. A related scientific and political debate is featured by the question of the divergence versus convergence of national systems (e.g Unger and Van Waarden, 1995). This debate has become very prominent in view of the development and enlargement of the European Union and the increasing role of other transnational bodies (such as NAFTA). Keywords such as harmonisation, the principle of subsidiarity, policy competition, "race to the bottom", social dumping, bench marking and (very recently, in the area of European employment policy) "the open method of co-ordination" (see Degryse and Pochet, 2001) dominate this debate.

These policy debates and practical developments have prompted a fast growing interest in questions regarding (the possibilities and limits of) policy learning, policy imitation and policy "mimicking" (for an overview see Hemerijck and Van Kersbergen, 1999 and Hemerijck and Visser, 2000, for a study of learning and adaptation in Dutch socio-economic policies see Visser and Hemerijck, 1997). So far, the possibilities for transplanting policies and legal reforms, including TLM-related policies, from one national system directly to another national systems or from the transnational level to the national level seem fairly dim. National systems are sometimes portrayed as "cognitively open" but "operationally" closed and studies end up in "comparing the incomparable" (cp. Blankenburg, 1979, Simitis, 1994, Teubner, 1998). In political and administrative studies, the focus on issues of "multi-level governance" and "shifts in governance" is a rapidly developing direction in research. It indicates that not only public, but also private actors (companies, pressure and lobby groups) can exert a strong influence on the outcomes of the debates at various levels. This impact might be exerted both, "vertically" i.e. at the European, national and subnational level, and horizontally, i.e. in various sectors, including the market sector (Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden, 2001 and Scharpf, 1999 on vertical and horizontal integration).

A second, more abstract and far-going solution is to construct analytically, on the basis of theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, "regimes" or "systems" that transcend individual countries. In this approach countries are attributed certain basic features which they

are expected to share with other countries that belong to the same "species". Thus complexity is reduced and added value is produced with respect to individual country comparisons.

The construction of regimes and systems has become a major, very popular game among academics. In the area of the labour market and the welfare state Esping-Andersen's 1990 classification of "the three worlds of welfare capitalism" is by far the most influential.[2] He discerns a liberal welfare regime, a social democractic welfare regime and a conservative welfare regime on the basis of key defining dimensions: the degree of decommodification and modes of stratification or solidarities. This typology met with much acclaim but also triggered critical accounts, empirical studies (e.g. Goodin et al, 1999 on "the real worlds of capitalism") and proposals for revision and adjustment, not least by the author himself. In the literature amendments were proposed such as adding a 'Latin-Rim' and 'Southern' model of the labour market (see section 3.3).

In another publication Esping-Andersen (1999) concedes that such a typology mirrors the political and ideological impetus that dominated a certain stage in the historical evolution of the systems. Thus the typology becomes static as it reflects the socio-economic conditions that existed earlier, notably in the 1960s and 1970s, known under the heading of industrial mass production and class-oriented social systems in which the interests of male manual workers were served dominantly, also known as the breadwinner model prioritising the stability of head's income and head's employment status. In proposing a revision, Esping-Andersen stresses the significance of the role of families that might operate as a buffer against income loss and work insecurity. This of course affects his political account of welfare regimes but so far did not convince him to modify his original typology. Others (Ferrera, 1996; Bonoli, 1997) argue that a fourth (Antipodean or perhaps Mediterranian) regime should be distinguished to take account of the particular role the family plays in these Southern regimes. As Esping-Andersen (1999: 94) concludes "the final judgement is not in yet".

Nevertheless, in our opinion typologies of regimes, be it welfare, employment or labour market regimes, are a valuable tool for exploring and scrutinizing the descriptive and explanatory (or even predictive) power of the TLM concept. In short our argument is that among different regimes one should expect to find (generally)

- differences regarding the degree to which certain transitions (as discerned in the TLM model) occur (and do not occur)

[2] Also Schmid has made several comparisons of employment systems, e.g. between the Dutch and German and Danish and German employment systems (Schmid, 1997, Schmid and Schönmann, 1999). Schmid places the German and Dutch employment regime as a form of '*welfare capitalism',* between a fully *competitive*- and a *coordinated* type of capitalism. The notion of 'welfare capitalism' pertains to the strong public interference on the labour market, through its legislation and regulatory framework, through the wage bargaining system and the system of 'public governance'. From a macro-economic point of view the counter cyclical impact of public expenditures on social security and social welfare on the business cycle, which applies to most European countries, might be considered an important 'raison d'être' of these systems (Schmid, 1997:7). Employment regimes might be defined as a set of institutions, regulations, norms, values and behaviour, which simultaneously determine the level of production and of employment. Both, *coordination* and *security* are seen as the two main distinct features of employment regimes (p. 4))

- differences regarding the outcomes of transitions in terms of work and income security.

The latter point – the outcomes or quality of transitions – needs some clarification. We agree with Cebrian et al. (2000: 2-4) that with respect to the outcomes of the transitions a fruitful distinction can be made between three types of transitions. First, *integrative* transitions can be defined, which refer to the inclusion of formerly unemployed persons into paid employment. Second, *maintenance* transitions should be discerned which refer to transitions people face when they are already employed and have discovered ways of maintaining employment continuity and employability. Third, *exclusionary* transitions might occur which are either interruptions of non-employment or unemployment or are one-way (dead-end street) transitions from employment to unemployment or out of work (non-employment).

In this paper we intend to explore the relationship between analytical employment systems and "real world" transitions or non-occurrence of transitions. We start from an amended version of Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare regimes by including a Southern regime thereby focussing on two labour market related "performance dimensions", namely "labour market flexibility" and "work security". Labour market flexibility is understood in terms of the likelihood or opportunity of making a transition from either state (employment, unemployment) into another for people who are not satisfied with the current state and want to move into another. In the 'real worlds' of current labour markets it implies that people should have the opportunitiy of making an upward transition. Such an upward transition can be either from 'bad' jobs (e.g. in terms of low wage) into 'good' jobs (satisfying wage), from insecure (temporary) into secure (permanent) jobs and from small part-time jobs into full-time jobs if they want to work more. These transitions refer to *maintenance transitions* whereas the notion of 'work security' is associated with *integrative and exclusionary transitions*, transitions from unemployment into employment and transitions from employment into unemployment. We will therefore employ a longitudinal definition of employment status where we look at transitions from partial exclusion over time into partial or full employment over time (see section 4). Hence, the work security aspect focuses on the longitudinal or long-term employment record of these regimes.

The association between 'employment regimes' and the performance indicators with respect to the flexibility and security nexus is summarised in Fig. 1 below.

We contend that the association between the classification of employment regimes and the flexibility-security nexus has a different impact on the occurrence (flexibility) and outcomes (security) of the transitions that will be subject to our research. From this perceived association the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. *Flexibility*. In countries that represent a 'liberal' or Anglo-Saxon employment regime labour market turnover is expected to be larger and hence, relatively more transitions will likely to occur within the labour force between the various employment statuses. More movements are expected from flexible employment into permanent employment and more transitions from part-time into full-time employment. The highly regulated but poorly performing labour markets of the Southern regimes will result in high numbers of flexible jobs but little mobility from flexible jobs into permanent employment.

It might also be presumed that in the liberal regimes relatively more often school-to-work transitions will occur than in the social-democratic and Southern regimes. At the same time our conjecture is that school-to-work transitions also happen more frequently in the corporatist countries with high levels of active labour market expenditures devoted to education and vocational training.

We further expect upward mobility into jobs with more working hours or more prospects in terms of permanency and wage levels to be higher in liberal regimes compared to corporatist, and social-democratic regimes whereas Southern regimes are expected to perform worse in this respect.

2. *Work security.* Simultaneously, we contend that in liberal regimes relatively more transitions will occur from partial or permanent employment into non-employment and unemployment but also more transitions from unemployment into part-time, flexible and permanent employment.

   In the same vein we presume that the movements from permanent employment into partial or full exclusion, i.e. work insecurity, will be larger in these regimes whereas employment stability is expected to be larger in corporatist and social democratic regimes. Again we contend that Southern regimes perform worse in this respect and will show rather high instability of employment and large movements from permanent employment into unemployment/non-participation and work insecurity and relatively few movements from unemployment and partial/full exclusion into permanent employment.

Fig. 1. Employment regimes and the flexibility – security nexus

Employment regime	Flexibility dimension (maintenance transitions)	Security dimension (integrative and exclusionary transitions)
Liberalist	+	-
Social democratic	-	+
Conservative	-/+	+
Southern regime	-/+	-

3. Employment Regimes: flexibility, security and working time transitions: evidence from the ECHP[3]

3.1 Transitional labour markets and types of transitions

The concepts of work are changing. Life-time employment in the meaning of working 40 hours a week for 50 weeks a year during 40 years over the life-cycle often with the same or a limited number of employers is loosing ground in favour of more flexible and diverse patterns of life-time employment.

The rise of atypical work and non-standard contracts reflects the needs of firms to adapt quickly to rapidly changing market conditions. These market changes emerge particularly due to new information and communication technologies. The notion of the 'flexible firm' implies that the adaptability of firms as far as personnel management is concerned, is partly also established by the creation of a segment of core workers and of peripheral workers. The existence of these two segments not necessarily implies that there is no or little mobility between them. On the contrary, for theoretical as well as empirical reasons it might be true that the mobility within and between the segments of core and peripheral workers is rather high and therefore overall labour turnover might even rise. Images of *segmentation* and *dynamics* are two sides of the same coin. Some individuals within the peripheral group of workers might move quickly into permanent jobs while others keep wandering around in the lower strata of the labour market. But also core workers are not deemed to stay in the same jobs; on the contrary "job-hopping" might be a better strategy to raise the lifetime or permanent income than staying with the same employer.

Quite some individuals belonging to the better strata of the labour market might experience rapid moves from one job into another either at the firm level or at the level of the external labour market. Whether this is actually the case for all workers might be doubted, but the image of a world with large segmentation and hardly any mobility is far from reality. The notion or ideal-type of a "transitional labour market" might gain importance in current labour markets. This implies that for rather large groups in society working life becomes a continuing sequence of rather short employment and unemployment events. Lifetime employment with the same employer, although for many workers still reality, will increasingly be unattainable for many new entrants on the labour market. This leaves aside that the modern worker is likely to be unwilling to stay with the same firm for his or her entire career due to changes in preferences for labour and leisure (Muffels, 2000).

The aim of this part of the paper is to acquire a deeper insight in these flows on the labour market and the factors that might be responsible for the great variations in these

[3] The figures in this part are derived from work that was carried out in a project under the fourth framework programme. For further details please contact the authors. For further reading we refer to Muffels & Fouarge (2002).

employment patterns across individuals and households within countries but also across countries. The focus will be on three sorts of transitions (see the introduction):

1. *maintenance* transitions. Here we focus on transitions *within employment*, between different employment statuses. However, employment status might be defined in a static (transversal) and a dynamic (longitudinal) way. Static definitions refer to stocks while dynamic definitions refer to flows. Stocks might be the number of flexible and permanent jobs or the number of part-time and full-time jobs. One might then look at movements between these stocks of flexible/permanent and part-time/full-time jobs within a certain time period. Within the TLM perspective the focus will however be on *longitudinal* definitions of employment, thus taking flows into account. Longitudinal employment looks at the attachment of the person to the labour market in a given time period (here 36 months). The attachment to the labour market is of course dependent on the timing of the labour market events that take place in that period. These events determine the individual's employment profile over time. Hence, if people work in all of the 36 months of observation we consider them in a transitional state of full employment, if they do work at all during these 36 months we might call it a state of full exclusion or full disintegration into the labour market and *interrupted careers* on the labour market might be labelled as states of partial longitudinal employment.

2. *integrative* and *exclusionary* transitions. Integrative transitions focus on *movements into* employment from being out of the labour force whereas exclusionary transitions refer to *movements out* of employment into unemployment or out of the labour force. Within a static perspective one might look at the transitions from not working into employment and from working into non-participation.

Within a dynamic TLM perspective, these sorts of transitions then refer to longitudinal employment patterns over time with intermittent periods of unemployment, disability or even early retirement. These intermittent periods of withdrawal constitute cases of exclusion only in so far these are forced due to collective layoffs, disability or retirement and in so far they are absorbing states indicating that they are persistent in nature. If they are the result of free will as might be true for temporary jobs or part-time unemployment, it is not justified to speak of exclusionary transitions because people might prefer these jobs for their shorter working hours or for rendering more leisure. With increasing age, in many cases a forced retreat from the labour market can be observed due to retirement, redundancy or collective layoffs. Therefore, labour market disintegration in terms of *enforced exclusion* might be at stake with the long-term unemployed, those seeking work but not able to get the job they want, the underemployed who work less than they want and the disabled and senior workers who are not expected to work. However, there is little information in the ECHP-data about whether the disintegration is due to enforced idleness or free will and preferences for leisure.[4] Within the framework of the *flexicurity* concept the distinction between the forced and unforced nature of the withdrawal is not without significance (on flexicurity see Wilthagen, 1998 and Wilthagen

[4] There is some information on the number of hours people want to work for the reference week, the week just before the date of interview, but not on the number of annual hours people want to work. However, that is the kind of information needed if the idea is to use the monthly calendar information to determine longitudinal work profiles.

2001b). Therefore, we tried to associate patterns of labour market mobility with 'outcome' indicators of labour market performance like the extent of *work security* or *employment stability*. We might also look at the association with *income security* because that might indicate whether the disintegration is enforced or due to free will, because it can be expected that very small numbers of people will choose freely for a state of *income insecurity*. For reasons of space we have left out this part of the analyses and our focus is on work insecurity and employment stability or volatility over time.

3.2 Data and definitions

The ECHP has been running only for a short period of time, from 1994 onwards, and to date only the data for the first three waves of 1994 to 1996 are available. Longitudinal employment status is defined over the 36 months of observation. Three years seem sufficient to observe at the European level quite some employment transitions. For the transitions on the labour market reported in this paper, we compared the employment status over the first 12 months in 1993 and the last 12 months in 1996.

Longitudinal employment status is defined as follows. The ECHP provides information on the activity status of the respondent for each month in the calendar year previous to the interview date. The frequency of monthly statuses then determines the extent to which people are employed, unemployed or not working over the 36 months period (usual status). In this approach people are therefore considered inactive only when they were not working in all of the 36 months period, i.e. not working all the time. The unit of analysis is the individual within households. Only the adults of working age are considered in the analyses.

3.3 Employment regimes

Comparative research into the labour market should take account of the evidence that stocks and flows on the labour market are affected not only by the demographic and economic situation at the country level, but also by cross-national institutional differences reflected in labour market policies and social security designs. Looking at the national settings it appears that there is a great variety in goals, objectives, tools, institutions and policies. Notwithstanding this great variety the idea that these systems cluster one way or another into a limited set of welfare and employment regimes is well known in the literature. We have already indicated this in section 2 of his paper. These regimes represent different 'worlds of welfare capitalism' (cf. Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1996, 1999), each being internally tightly integrated, and each being sharply differentiated from one another (cf. Goodin et al., 1999). Each welfare state is of course uniquely defined by its own logic in terms of institutional set-up, policy design and functioning but, as suggested by Esping-Andersen, also clusters around some ideal-typical distinct regime types.

His typology was criticised by authors like Leibfried (1992), Ferrera (1996) and Bonoli (1997) in view of his neglect of what they called a Southern or 'Latin-Rim' model of the welfare state. They argued that the Southern, Mediterranean countries belong to a different type of welfare regime with its familial characteristics and its immature and selective social security system granting poor benefits and lacking a guaranteed minimum benefit system. Esping-Andersen admitted in his later work (1996) that the Southern countries share some Catholic and familial traditions but that they do not form a specific type or group of countries. They were in his view merely underdeveloped species of the traditional Corporatist type (cf. Arts and Gelissen, 1999).

As the ECHP-data contain information on the Southern European countries it is possible to test whether the Southern labour markets show an essentially distinct pattern. According to Esping-Andersen's classification of liberal, conservative-corporatist and social-democratic countries (1990) the UK and Ireland, as liberal welfare states in the ideal-typical sense, should be set apart from the Scandinavian (Denmark, Finland; the ECHP contains yet no information on Norway or Sweden) and continental social-democratic welfare states (Netherlands). The classification of Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999) of Ireland under the liberal heading is however rather doubtful, while considering the range of labour market indicators it only shares the liberal feature of a low level of employment protection regulation. Looking at the other labour market indicators it seems to share the corporatist feature of an active labour market policy and the corporatist, 'breadwinner's state'-characteristic of a low female employment rate. In terms of familial characteristics it shares the typical features of a Southern welfare state. Ireland should therefore be considered to belong to a *hybrid* type of welfare state that does not fit into any of the ideal-typical welfare states. But in order to avoid the inclusion of Ireland as the only example of a hybrid type it was decided to keep Ireland under the same liberal heading as the UK and to test using the three-wave European panel-data whether that makes sense empirically or not. For that reason it was decided to use an amended version of Esping-Andersen's classification. The UK and Ireland are maintained under the liberal heading, notwithstanding our reservations for Ireland, but the Southern welfare states are set apart as a distinct regime (Arts et al., 1999; Goodin et al., 1999). Countries like Germany, Belgium, France, Austria and Luxembourg then belong to a continental corporatist type of welfare state and the Netherlands and the Scandinavian welfare regimes are classified under the social-democratic regime heading. The Southern regime cluster includes Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy.[5]

[5] To test the reliability of this classification, the empirical model for partial exclusion in Section 3.6 (see Table 3.4) has been estimated using country dummies instead of 'employment regime' dummies. It emerges that the model including the employment regime dummies captures 97% of the variance of the model with country dummies.

3.4 The extent of transitions in the labour market

First, we want to take a look at the stability and volatility of the various employment and unemployment states in the labour market. Considering the relatively short observation period in the mid-nineties, it cannot be ruled out that the mobility patterns we observe are influenced by differences in the business cycle across countries. At the time of observation, however, all countries under scrutiny were in the same (upward) phase of the business cycle. In Table 3.1 the results are given. It is clear from this table that the employment state is the most stable one and that when moving from permanent employment into the other states of self-employment, unemployment and education or training the stability decreases and the volatility increases. The states of retirement and out-of-the-labour-force seem to be more or less *absorbing* states with rather low mobility rates except for the mobility between the two.

Across *regimes* it turns out that the stability of employment is largest in social-democratic and corporatist regimes and lowest in Southern and Liberal regimes. Looking at states not in employment like unemployment and out of the labour force the corporatist regimes show highest stability whereas again highest volatility is attained in liberal regimes.

The transitions from unemployment and from education and training into permanent employment are highest in liberal regimes. This corroborates our conjectures about the various regimes. The corporatist regime behaves as expected while it is primarily aimed at stabilising income through employment stability. Also the Liberal regime performs as expected while it seems to have more mobility into permanent employment and also a bit more mobility out of employment. Therefore it seems to have the most flexible labour market of all four regime types.

Table 3.1: Proportion of Persons Moving Between Main Activity Status Between 1993 and 1995 (N=102,788)

Regime type	Employed	Self-employed	Unem-ployed	Education/ Training	Retired	Oth. Not-working	Total
Liberal							
Employed	**86.5**	3.4	2.3	1.3	2.1	4.4	100
Self-employed	13.4	**78.3**	0.9	0.0	1.9	5.5	100
Unemployed	39.3	4.2	**34.6**	3.0	3.6	15.3	100
Education/Training	47.8	0.1	10.9	**31.9**	1.0	8.4	100
Retired	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2	**87.8**	11.0	100
Other not-working	10.0	1.9	2.6	2.3	18.2	**65.1**	100
Total	46.7	8.5	3.8	2.3	21.0	17.8	100
Social-democratic							
Employed	**90.6**	1.4	2.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	100
Self-employed	10.3	**76.7**	2.5	0.7	3.1	6.7	100
Unemployed	28.0	2.5	**39.5**	4.7	2.6	22.8	100
Education/Training	32.9	0.7	5.8	**58.4**	0.0	2.2	100
Retired	0.6	0.1	0.3	0.5	**72.2**	26.4	100
Other not-working	4.4	0.9	7.6	1.0	0.7	**85.4**	100
Total	49.9	3.9	6.6	5.8	7.9	26.0	100
Corporatist							
Employed	**89.1**	1.7	3.8	0.6	2.9	2.0	100
Self-employed	7.6	**81.1**	1.5	0.2	3.8	5.8	100
Unemployed	31.7	3.9	**45.5**	3.1	6.0	9.9	100
Education/Training	22.2	1.5	11.1	**59.3**	0.1	5.8	100
Retired	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.0	**96.4**	2.9	100
Other not-working	6.6	1.2	3.2	0.8	9.2	**79.2**	100
Total	42.6	6.4	5.8	5.0	25.4	14.9	100
Southern							
Employed	**82.8**	3.5	8.2	0.4	1.9	3.3	100
Self-employed	9.1	**75.5**	3.9	0.3	4.4	6.8	100
Unemployed	33.4	5.7	**40.8**	2.7	2.3	15.1	100
Education/Training	15.1	2.4	13.6	**63.3**	0.0	5.6	100
Retired	0.4	0.9	0.2	0.0	**90.0**	8.5	100
Other not-working	4.9	3.4	6.4	0.5	7.9	**77.0**	100
Total	31.3	12.0	9.1	5.6	16.5	25.4	100

1) Excluding Finland and Austria
Source: Eurostat, ECHP 1994-1996

Reading example: In the "liberal regimes", 39.3 % of the unemployed moved between 1993 and 1995 into the status of "Employed", whereas 2.3 % of the employed transited to the status of unemployed.

3.5 Maintenance transitions and labour market flexibility across regimes

Transitions between states of permanent and flexible jobs

First, the focus is on transitions between flexible and permanent jobs. The number of workers in non-standard employment is an indicator for a 'loose' attachment to the labour market but a rather static one. Longitudinal measures of labour flexibility and work insecurity are preferable but here the data limit the sort of analyses that can be conducted. Because of lack of information on the type of contract in the first wave of the ECHP it appeared only possible to look at the changes across the second and the third wave. In Table 3.2 the transitions between the various working statuses between 1995 and 1996 are presented.

There is quite some *mobility* in atypical jobs like a temporary job or a casual job (see also Delsen, 1995). Only 43% of the people in a temporary job remained in that job the year after and almost 30% moved into unemployment or out of the labour force. No less than a quarter of people in temporary jobs moved into a permanent job the next year. The mobility into permanent jobs is highest for the 'other arrangements'-type of jobs. This category seem to represent very 'typical' jobs like temporary agency work, on-call contracts, zero-hours contracts, labour pool jobs, freelance jobs, housework and the like. Almost half of them, 45%, were capable of moving into a permanent job the year after.

Looking particularly at the mobility patterns of people in *temporary jobs* it is shown that they move more likely into permanent jobs in the liberal countries than they do in the social-democratic and corporatist countries. This confirms our conjecture depicted in figure 1 that the liberal regime scores highest in terms of 'a flexible labour market' where movements upwards and downwards the job ladder occur more frequently than in social-democratic or corporatist regimes. The Southern regime performs worse in getting workers from non-standard jobs into permanent jobs, although they have the largest share of flexible jobs. For this reason and for the worse employment situation in Southern countries, only one in five people in a temporary job moved into a permanent job two years later whereas it is one in three people in the liberal regimes. The same pattern is found for the casual jobs and partly also for the 'other arrangements' category, although for both types of jobs the corporatist regime performs better in terms of mobility rates into permanent jobs than the social-democratic regime.

Table 3.2: Transition Rate of Employment Statuses Between 1995 and 1996 by Employment Regime[1)]

	Perm job	Temp job	Casual work	Other arrang	Not-working	Total
Liberal						
Perm job	**88.7**	2.1	0.8	1.3	7.3	100
Temporary	32.2	**39.0**	3.2	2.2	23.4	100
Casual work	28.8	3.5	**26.9**	3.4	37.4	100
Other arrang	43.4	5.0	3.2	**21.5**	26.9	100
Not-working	8.6	1.7	2.5	0.8	**86.4**	100
Total	46.2	3.1	2.3	1.4	47.1	100
Social Democratic						
Perm job	**91.8**	0.7	0.6	1.5	5.5	100
Temporary	27.4	**32.1**	6.6	10.1	23.8	100
Casual work	22.8	11.9	**34.8**	3.3	27.4	100
Other arrang	36.2	6.3	1.5	**32.6**	23.5	100
Not-working	19.3	3.1	0.9	1.4	**75.4**	100
Total	46.0	2.9	1.3	2.2	47.7	100
Corporatist						
Perm job	**89.6**	1.6	0.7	1.2	6.9	100
Temporary	27.5	**39.2**	0.3	2.1	30.9	100
Casual work	33.0	1.6	**26.6**	13.8	25.1	100
Other arrang	58.2	3.9	2.1	**23.6**	12.2	100
Not-working	6.7	3.5	0.3	0.3	**89.2**	100
Total	45.3	4.1	0.7	1.1	48.8	100
Southern						
Perm job	**87.3**	2.6	1.1	0.8	8.3	100
Temporary	21.0	**48.3**	2.2	2.8	25.8	100
Casual work	15.7	12.4	**28.2**	5.7	37.9	100
Other arrang	31.3	15.4	7.1	**21.7**	24.6	100
Not-working	3.4	2.8	0.9	0.3	**92.5**	100
Total	25.4	5.2	1.4	0.8	67.2	100

1) Excluding Finland

Source: Muffels & Fouarge (2001)

Reading example: In the "liberal regimes", 32.2 % of temporary workers moved between 1995 and 1996 into permanent jobs, whereas 2.1 % of people with permanent jobs moved into temporary jobs.

The differences are quite large especially for the 'other arrangements' category. Almost 60% of the people in this type of job found a permanent job within two years in the corporatist countries but only 30% in the Southern countries.

Transitions from part-time into full-time employment and vice versa

A similar picture might be obtained if we look at transitions between different working time statuses. We have made a distinction between short and long hours part-time work and full-time employment (>35 hours working a week). Table 3.3 reports the results.

Table 3.3: Proportions of People Moving Between Different Working Time Statuses Between 1994 and 1996 by Employment Regime[1)] (N=45.630)

Regimes 1996 / **1994**	Short-hours part-time	Long-hours part-time	Full-time	Total 1994
Liberal				
Short-hours PT	**49.8**	31.5	18.7	100
Long-hours PT	6.1	**66.6**	27.4	100
Full-time (>35)	0.9	8.6	**90.5**	100
Total	5.3	21.0	73.7	100
Social Democratic				
Short-hours PT	**69.1**	18.0	12.9	100
Long-hours PT	6.4	**74.2**	19.4	100
Full-time (>35)	0.6	6.6	**92.8**	100
Total	8.2	21.0	70.8	
Corporatist				
Short-hours PT	**59.6**	24.5	15.9	100
Long-hours PT	3.3	**71.5**	25.2	100
Full-time (>35)	0.5	6.5	**93.0**	100
Total	2.4	16.6	81.0	100
Southern				
Short-hours PT	**32.4**	25.8	41.8	100
Long-hours PT	3.2	**52.7**	44.1	100
Full-time (>35)	0.5	7.3	**92.3**	100
Total 1996	1.8	14.2	84.0	100

1) Excluding Finland

Source: Muffels & Fouarge (2001)

Reading example: In the "liberal regimes", 18.7 % of people working short-hours part-time moved between 1994 and 1996 into full-time, whereas only 0.9 % of full-time workers moved into short-hours part-time work.

In liberal and social-democratic regimes the share of part-time work is much higher than in corporatist or southern regimes whereas less people are in full-time jobs.[6] But more important is that we find that in social-democratic regimes less people are capable of moving from a short-hours job into a long hours job or into full-time employment. Liberal regimes but particularly Southern regimes perform much better here in terms of upward mobility into longer hours jobs. This again corroborates our conjectures made in figure 1 where we contend that the liberal regime perform best in terms of labour market flexibility. Whether they perform equally well in terms of work security is subject of research in the next section.

3.6 Integrative and exclusionary transitions and work security

Next we consider transitions, which were labelled as integrative and exclusionary transitions because they allow us to look at the aspect of work security as part of the flexicurity concept. In the previous tables we already included the static information on the transitions between work statuses and statuses of not working. A more challenging way to look at these sorts of transitions between the various employment profiles is the use of longitudinal information on employment and unemployment (Table 3.4).

If the longitudinal employment profiles are calculated on the 36 months of information it is found that about 58% of the working-age people in all countries are fully (44%) or partially (14%) employed[7] whereas about 41% is partially (11%) or fully (30%) excluded from the labour market. Hence, more than one in four persons in Europe seems disintegrated into the labour market within a long-term perspective (partially employed or partially excluded). In Table 3.4, the transition matrices for the employment statuses between the 12 months in 1993 and the 12 months in 1995 are presented. The percentages on the diagonal of the transition matrix show, that there is a good deal of stability in the labour market position of workers and job seekers particularly for people either occupying a permanent job in the starting year or being fully excluded from the labour force. Most of the workers in secure employment in the starting year (1993) were still in secure employment in 1995 (87%). Similarly, most of the people fully excluded in 1993 were still excluded in 1995 (81%). But for those in partial employment or partial exclusion the volatility across the two years appears much higher. For those categories mobility from one state into the other is rather substantial. A closer look shows that it is not only upward mobility that is high but downward mobility as well. For the partially employed (work insecure) the findings show that about 50% were capable of moving into secure employment in the period. At the same time almost half of them (50%) were not

6 The Netherlands represent an interesting case as it combines a large share of part-time and temporary jobs and as it takes a special position in Esping-Andersen's 'typology of welfare states' (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 86-88). In the case of flexible employment the regulation of employment protection in the Netherlands plays an important role in constraining and enabling transitions (Wielers, 2001). Moreover, the evolution of part time work in the Netherlands is not as much the result of (active) labour market policy, but likely the result of market forces and demographic conditions (Visser, 2000).

7 Partially employed are those people who worked less than 100% of all the months available for work but more than 50% of the time. The partially excluded are those who worked more than zero months but less than 50% of the months available for work.

and either stayed in insecure employment (21%) or moved into full exclusion from the labour market (29%). The evidence for these weakly employed shows that the labour market prospects for these people is mixed. For half of them the prospects are good while for the other half they are rather bad because their attachment to the labour market is gradually declining and in the final stage they become fully excluded from the labour market.

Overall, the conclusion might be that there is a large segment in the labour market for which the employment opportunities are rather good, even after being employed in *unstable* or *insecure* jobs, whereas a sizeable segment lives in steadily worsening labour market conditions. It is certainly not true that people once they have entered into unstable jobs have few chances to move into stable jobs. This challenges the view that the labour market is segregated between tracks of stable or secure jobs and unstable, insecure jobs between which there is little mobility. On the other hand there is quite some persistency in work security (inclusion) as well as in work insecurity (exclusion) on the labour market indicating that indeed the images of a high labour turnover and a sizeable amount of labour market exclusion are two sides of the same coin in modern labour markets (Verma et al., 1999; Muffels & Steijn, 1999). The number of *persistently employed* is much lower in the South (36% against 49% in the corporatist countries in Central Europe). Security in terms of stable employment is lower in the Southern region and hence the attachment to the labour market is weaker. However, unexpectedly, the prevalence of *insecure employment* (partially employed + partially excluded) shows to be higher in the liberal and social-democratic countries, 29% there against 24% in the South. The continental corporatist countries are just in between. There seems to be more instability in the longitudinal working statuses of people being partially employed or partially excluded from the labour market. On the other hand the findings show that (1) full employment over time is *equally stable* in the liberal, social-democratic and corporatist countries and slightly less stable in the South and (2) that full exclusion from the labour market, due to lack of employment, is *more prevalent* in Southern countries.

The evidence on insecure employment is therefore different from what was found earlier with respect to flexible labour being more prevalent in Southern countries. The Southern countries seem to have a different *employment record* compared to the other countries because they have less stable employment, less unstable employment but more stable unemployment. From other sources it is known that the Southern states are characterised by strong employment regulations (OECD, 1999), less active labour market policies and high unemployment rates due to lower economic growth rates. The numbers of people in employment is generally lower as is employment growth. This might point to a different type of employment regime.

Table 3.4: Proportion of Persons Moving Between Employment Statuses Between 1993 (12 months) and 1995 (12 months), by Regime Type (in Percentages of all Persons Belonging to the Category in 1993)[1)]

Regime type	Fully employed (work secure)	Partially employed (work insecure)	Partially excluded	Fully excluded	Total
Europe					
Fully employed	**86.8**	4.3	1.7	7.2	100
Partially employed	50.4	**14.8**	6.3	28.5	100
Partially excluded	41.3	14.6	**11.8**	32.3	100
Fully excluded	10.5	3.7	4.8	**81.1**	100
Total	44.2	14.2	11.4	30.2	100
Liberal					
Fully employed	**86.6**	5.4	1.8	6.2	100
Partially employed	58.9	**9.9**	3.8	27.4	100
Partially excluded	46.5	16.3	**7.9**	29.4	100
Fully excluded	13.2	5.5	6.1	**75.2**	100
Total	47.1	17.5	11.8	23.6	100
Social-democratic					
Fully employed	**87.6**	5.1	2.2	5.1	100
Partially employed	45.7	**24.9**	8.7	20.7	100
Partially excluded	40.5	17.5	**13.6**	28.4	100
Fully excluded	12.1	6.2	7.2	**74.5**	100
Total	47.7	16.8	12.9	22.6	100
Corporatist					
Fully employed	**87.9**	4.0	1.6	6.5	100
Partially employed	52.1	**14.4**	6.1	27.5	100
Partially excluded	47.8	14.4	**7.9**	30.0	100
Fully excluded	12.0	4.0	5.0	**79.1**	100
Total	48.7	14.6	10.4	26.3	100
Southern					
Fully employed	**85.0**	3.7	1.7	9.6	100
Partially employed	41.6	**16.6**	8.1	33.6	100
Partially excluded	28.4	13.0	**19.6**	39.0	100
Fully excluded	8.0	2.5	3.8	**85.7**	100
Total	35.9	11.4	12.1	40.6	100

1) Excluding Finland and Austria

Source: Muffels & Fouarge (2001)

Subsistence security is not attained in Southern welfare states by a generous welfare system like in the social democratic regime, or a highly flexible, efficiently operating labour market with low unemployment rates like in the liberal regime but by a very regulated labour market with security of employment. Employment security seems to be attained at the expense of a less efficiently operating labour market, because of which such a regime has to accept high levels of unemployment and inactivity.

The picture emerging here in terms of the classificaton of welfare state regimes is that the Southern welfare regimes appear to be quite distinct from the continental corporatist and social-democratic regimes in the North. However, the liberal regime type hardly distinguishes itself from the continental corporatist ones. The liberal type certainly has less employment regulation but the share of temporary employment is substantial and larger than one might expect in a liberal regime where there is no need to attain flexibility by temporary jobs since flexibility is innately achieved by a low level of employment protection and prevailing firm practices with respect to layoffs and quits in situations of decreasing demand.

The evidence found here that the number of people with a weak attachment to the labour market appears lower in the Southern countries does not mean that the labour market performs better. People need not stay shorter unemployed in these regimes nor do they have more chances to escape from precarious employment. Due to the lower economic and employment growth in the Southern countries the chances to move upwards on the job ladder into permanent jobs is likely worse than in the other European countries. To examine this issue further, the transition probabilities to move upwards or downwards on the job ladder across the various countries are viewed. The upshot for these employment regimes is to what extent they permit people in partial employment or partial exclusion to escape from these precarious jobs and to move upwards into better, more secure jobs.

In Table 3.4 the transitions across the three years by regime cluster are depicted. People in full, secure employment in 1993 have slightly higher chances in liberal, social-democratic and corporatist states to remain in stable jobs in 1994 than they have in Southern Europe. The findings show that in the South more people in full or secure employment are likely to move the following year into full exclusion from the labour market (10% against 5 to 6%).

Furthermore, the partially employed and partially excluded people have much higher chances in the liberal, corporatist and social-democratic states to escape from unstable and to move into stable jobs than people have in particularly the Southern region. Southern people with partial or insecure labour records in 1993 have much lower probabilities to escape the situation and to move into secure jobs. About 42% of the people in insecure jobs in the South are capable of moving upwards on the job ladder into stable jobs against 60% in the liberal states, 52% in the social-democratic countries and 46% in the corporatist countries (the European average is 50%). Also the proportion of people dropping out from partial employment into full exclusion is still higher in Southern countries than in the other regions (34% of the insecure in the South drops out against 21% in the social-democratic countries and 28% in the liberal and corporatist countries). The conclusion must be that upward mobility is lower in Southern Europe and downward mobility higher. Reviewing the evidence on the labour market performance of these employment regimes it might be concluded that the Southern regime is performing worse in terms of enhancing job mobility and preventing labour market exclusion. What the reasons for these differences are, apart from differences in employment protection legislation, is left for further scrutiny.

4. Conclusions and Discussion

The first issue dealt with in the paper is whether the TLM-concept might be useful to formulate hypotheses about the different performance of employment regimes in terms of the size and nature of transitions that might be used as indicators for 'labour market flexibility' and 'work security'. These two dimensions are narrowly associated with the two basic dimensions used in Esping-Andersen's account, i.e. the degree of decommodification and the modes of social stratification. The security aspect fits nicely in the stratification thesis while it pertains to the presumption that the labour market is segmented in two distinct layers, a layer with small part-time and flexible jobs and a layer with long-hours part-time and full-time permanent jobs. The flexibility aspect is clearly linked to the decommodification thesis since we might expect that the higher the degree of decommodification (or of public interference) the more barriers there are for labour mobility and for adjusting the work force to changes in final demand (flexibility).

Starting from the ideal-typical features of the various models we were able to derive some hypotheses about the flexibility-security nexus in terms of the sort of transitions we might expect to be dominant in the various regimes. First, we expected *maintenance transitions* indicating the amount of 'volume flexibility' to be larger in liberal regimes and smaller in Southern regimes. Second, we assumed that the amount of *integrative and exclusionary* transitions, indicating the level of employment security (or employability) over time would be larger in Southern regimes. These hypothesis were generally confirmed, the liberal regime stands out as a regime that combines a high level of labour mobility and flexibility (although not much higher than the corporatist or social-democratic regimes) with a low level of work security and the social-democratic regime with a high level of work security but a (somewhat) lower level of labour market mobility. However, these regimes do not fit that nicely in the 'ideal-type' as this conclusion might suggest: the liberal regime also have fairly high levels of employment security and social-democratic countries have fairly high levels of labour mobility and flexibility. The convergence hypothesis might find some ground in these findings.

Notwithstanding this assessment, we find that the Southern regime can and should be quite clearly distinguished from the other regimes in terms of its performance with respect to safeguarding a high level of flexibility and work security. The Southern regime clearly performs worse in both dimensions. Although the share of flexible jobs is rather high, upward mobility into permanent jobs is lower in the South and downward mobility (from work into exclusion) is higher. Hence, the Southern regime is performing worse in terms of enhancing job mobility and preventing labour market exclusion. Apparently, regimes differ and the differences concern the particular trade-off or balance between flexibility and security within the distinct regimes.

Knowing that regimes matter in explaining differences in labour market performance, the question arises how to interpret these differences. Is it through the level of incentives, the generosity of the benefit system, the policy coordination mechanisms, the system of industrial

relations (wage bargaining) or the emphasis on the family that these regimes perform differently or is it a mixture of these factors? The fact that the flexibility-security nexus varies across regimes is not self-evident, as many commentators contend that the flexibilization and reform of the labour market is to a high degree triggered by and within a context of enhanced international competition (Ozaki, 1999). This implies that these very trade-offs must originate in particular traditions, sets of institutions and mixes of coordination mechanisms and that different trade-offs are being accepted, facilitated or promoted within the distinct regimes.

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